

The Flowering of Romanticism: 1798-1832

-Romanticism a reflection of social changes as a result of industrial/agricultural revolutions

- Outgrowth of neoclassicism + reaction against it
- Jean Jacques Rousseau: father of the movement/French Enlightenment thinker; argued the gov'n't & the governed had a social contract → French Revolution

-Idea of Romanticism:

- Human beings are essentially good, not evil
- Emphasis on the individual, personal, & emotional
- Movement of protest for personal freedom and radical reform

-Issues in English society (domestic & foreign):

- Crime, poor sanitation, child labor, factory abuses
- Lack of equal representation in Parliament, persecution of religious groups
- Loss of American colonies, corruption in India, slave trade

-William Pitt (Tory P.M.) wanted major reforms but French revolution in 1789 stalled his plans

- Reforms abandoned b/c equated with revolution; domestic repression to stop any rebellion

-British sympathy for French until revolutionary moderates fell from power

- Edmund Burke (American sympathizer) denounced radical France → rift in Whig Party

-French Revolution → 1793 French troops in Holland → Britain went to war w/France for 25 years

-Irish rebellion against Britain b/c of French support; French failed to help & rebellion quelled

- William Pitt sponsored reforms to gain support from Irish
 - ✚ Roman Catholics got the right to vote in exchange for dissolution of Irish Parliament; 1800 Act of Union formalized agreement (United Kingdom formed)
- George III refused Catholics the right to vote → William Pitt forced to resign

-1799, Napoleon took control of France, promised democracy → 1804, crowned himself emperor

- Took control over most of Europe

-1804, William Pitt got his position back & prepared for a French invasion

- Battle of Trafalgar: English beat French off coast of Spain → no threat of French invasion
- Pitt died @ 46 years old b/c of "overwork"

-Napoleon closed ports to British trade & placed Joseph (brother) on the Spanish throne

-Peninsular War: British troops removed French presence from Iberian Peninsula

- Domestic: George III declared insane → son George (Prince of Wales) became regent
 - ✚ George enjoyed gambling, favored Whigs but sided w/the Tories; arrested anyone who criticized him

-1812, Napoleon invaded Russia; Russian winter destroyed the troops

The Victorians: 1832-1901

-Victorian era featured overseas expansion and domestic reform, time of prosperity

-Changes & advancements in society

- Middle class population grew, working conditions improved
- nation headed towards democracy
- Transatlantic cable laid & automobile, electric lighting
- Antiseptic medicine (Joseph Lister); modern nursing schools (Florence Nightingale)

-Some characteristics of Victorian era: complacency, hypocrisy, prudishness

-1837, Victoria took the throne at age 18

- Emphasized moral behavior & attended to royal duties
- Tutored by Lord Melbourne P.M. → accepted constitutional monarch role (advisor)
- Married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha (German cousin)
 - ✚ 1861, Prince Albert died; Victoria mourned him & abandoned some royal duties

-Victoria reigned for 64 years (longest reign in British history); Golden & Diamond Jubilees

- Talented P.M.s during her reign: Lord Melbourne, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston, Benjamin Disraeli, William E. Gladstone

-Reforms under Lord Melbourne and Whigs (1830s)

- Abolition of slavery in British Empire
- Restrictions on child labor in factories
- Reform Bill of 1832: expanded voting rights to men w/certain amounts of property

-Whig goal ≠ democracy, but “enlightened government” in the hands of upper class

- Chartism: movement by working class to demand universal male suffrage; ignored

-1841 election, Robert Peel and Tories rose to power → continuation of gradual reform

- Safety laws for miners and factory workers

-Chartists & Anti-Corn Law League showed their agitation to Peel

- Rains of 1845 ruined English crops & led to disease in Irish potato crop → Peel agreed to repeal Corn Law to help Irish famine end
 - ✚ Beginning of free trade in Britain

-Free trade issue between Tories → some Tories joined the Whigs & formed the Liberal party

- Dominant political figure: Lord Palmerston, moderate Whig and foreign minister
 - ✚ Annexation of New Zealand, acquisition of Hong Kong, kept France out of Egypt, kept Russia out of Turkey

-1854, Britain joined Crimean War to fight against Russia

- British defeats/mistakes → public wants change